

**DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL**

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August 27, 1997

**97-31**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CHP AIMS FOR SAFE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY ON HIGHWAYS**

As California motorists head toward traditionally crowded highways on Labor Day holiday weekend, the California Highway Patrol (CHP) is urging drivers and passengers to protect themselves by avoiding alcohol, observing speed limits and wearing safety belts.

“Labor Day is usually one of the worst holidays of the year for crashes,” said CHP Commissioner Dwight Helmick. “The summer is ending, and everybody wants to squeeze in one last fling before the September school-and-work routine sets in. Traffic volumes will be high and unfortunately so is the potential for collisions.

Last year 37 people died in motor vehicle crashes during the 78-hour Labor Day holiday. In addition, CHP Officers made 1,579 DUI arrests during that same period.

If you plan to travel during the holiday, the CHP has several suggestions that can reduce the risk to you and your passengers:

- Leave plenty of time for your trip. If you cannot leave early, do not become impatient with the traffic. Take a break from driving at least once an hour. Share the driving among all those with valid drivers licenses.
- Alcohol and driving do not mix. Make sure that only sober drivers get behind the wheel.
- Maintain safe speeds for conditions. Even if the posted speed limit is 65 or 70 mph, when traffic is heavy or visibility is limited, a lower speed is safer.

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- Remember the “rules of the road” and drive accordingly. Obeying stop signs and signals, leaving at least two seconds between you and the car ahead, and practicing common courtesy with other drivers helps keep everyone on the road safe.
- Always buckle up on every trip no matter how short. Safety belts protect you and your passengers from other drivers who may not be as careful.

This year CHP Officers will be on the road in a “Maximum Enforcement Period” which will start at 6:01 p.m. on Friday, August 29, and end at midnight, Monday, September 1.

“We want people to think safety whenever they get behind the wheel this summer. Common sense and common courtesy will go a long way toward achieving that goal,” Commissioner Helmick said.

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